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U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT
2 March 1987

WASHINGTON WHISPERS

■
Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd is lobbying hard behind the scenes to sink confirmation of Robert Gates as new chief of the Central Intelligence Agency. Byrd met privately with top Democrats on the Intelligence Committee to oppose Gates but was told the President's second choice might well be somebody even worse.

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A major shake-up of the Soviet KGB is reported in the wind. Irked that the secret police set back his reform campaign by using heavy-handed tactics to break up demonstrations by dissidents, Kremlin boss Gorbachev is believed ready to divide the KGB into internal and external units—similar to the FBI and the CIA—to dilute its vast power and disarm some of his harshest critics.

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